



4 July 2011

Dr Colin J Grant
Chief Executive
Biosecurity Australia
GPO Box 858
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Dr Grant,

Fruit West is the producer committee for all Apple, Pear, Citrus and Stone fruit producers in Western Australia. We represent 470 apple and pear growers in total, who are based in growing regions including; the Perth Hills, Donnybrook, Manjimup and other areas in the South West.

Due to recent events, including those affecting the live cattle trade from our north and the review of non-regulated New Zealand apple imports, Fruit West has deep concern for Australian agriculture. We are clearly losing all control of our own destiny. We are particularly concerned for the Pear industry in areas such as the Goulburn Valley and Stanthorpe. Local conditions would dictate that these industries could simply disappear in a single season should Fire Blight find it's way into Australia.

To the Western Australian fruit industries, the most disturbing aspect of the review is that apples will be allowed in to our country based on New Zealand Orchard Practice protocols, the details of which have not been disclosed. In order to understand the risk to our livelihood, surely we have a right to know what these protocols are based upon?

We firmly believe that Australia, NOT New Zealand, should manage the receipt of New Zealand fruit, to ensure that import protocols do not place our industries at risk. This must be a totally transparent process and should include the following:

1. That where a pre-harvest outbreak of fire blight is detected, fruit from that block or orchard should be excluded from export to Australia;
2. When a heavy infestation of apple leaf curling midge or leaf rollers occur in an orchard, that either the fruit be excluded or fumigated;
3. That from each consignment, 600 cartons be inspected to ensure no trash is entering the country via the cartons. Should cartons contain trash, those suppliers should be excluded from exporting until a review of procedures is completed;
4. That high-risk areas for European canker such as Suckland and Otago be excluded from exporting to Australia;
5. That should there be a regional outbreak of fire blight, trade be suspended until a review of procedures is completed and alternative protocols are established.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Darbyshire
Chair, Fruit West